

Appl. No. : 09/982,454
Filed : October 17, 2001

REMARKS

The undersigned thanks the Examiner for the courteous telephone interview on October 24, 2003. The present Amendment is submitted in light of the discussion at the interview.

Interview Summary

The undersigned explained the differences between the claimed invention and McDiarmid (US 5242501) with regard to the support structures. The Examiner explained that the claim language included McDiarmid, but admitted that the invention disclosed in the specification did not have a vertical lip portion whereas McDiarmid had a vertical lip portion. The Examiner stated that if the claims were amended to clarify the above, the above reference would be removed. No agreement was reached.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1 and 10 have been amended to clarify the invention in light of the interview. Claim 21 has been added. Support for Claim 21 can be found in Figures 2-4, for example. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 7, 9-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aruga (US 5688331) in view of McDiarmid (US 5242501).

As the Examiner clarified at the interview, Fig. 5 of McDiarmid shows a surface peripheral portion with a lip portion and an inner slanted side surface which is defined between the vertical surface and the point of contact with the substrate on the substrate-supporting surface.

In contrast, in the claims as amended herein, the slanted inner side surface continues from the top surface and extends to the substrate-supporting surface. That is, the slanted inner side surface contacts both the top surface and the substrate-supporting surface, i.e., no vertical surface exists.

Further, in McDiarmid, the inner slanted side surface and the remaining substrate-supporting surface are arranged at the same angle. In contrast, in the claims as amended herein, the inner slanted side surface is slanted outward at an angle greater than the substrate-supporting surface at a position contacting the substrate.

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Furthermore, the claimed structures are configured to prevent a plasma from converging on either the lip portion or the substrate. McDiarmid's apparatus is a thermal CVD and is irrelevant to plasma convergence. Aruga does not teach or even suggest the specific structure of a susceptor.

Thus, even if Aruga and McDiarmid are combined, the combination still could not lead to Claim 1 or 10 as amended herein. Modifications of McDiarmid could not be motivated because neither Aruga nor McDiarmid teaches or even suggests the desirability of the specific configuration. The remaining claims are dependent ultimately on either Claims 1 or 10, and at least for the above reasons, as with Claims 1 and 10, the dependent claims also could not be obvious over the prior art.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

New Claim 21

Claim 21 has been added. Claim 21 is a rephrased Claim 1 and clarifies the above-discussed features even more. Thus, Claim 21 also could not be obvious over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn and the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: October 13, 2003

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